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DELINEATION OF ENGINEERING AND SURVEYING

In rural areas regarding subdivision development of property, an issue has arisen between surveyors and engineers wherein the surveyors feel they should take responsibility for engineering design because engineering expertise is not available and the importance of such engineering expertise is questionable. Engineers do not subscribe to this extension of the responsibilities of surveyors into their practice.

On September 17, 1987, three members of the State Board of Architectural and Engineering Examiners (Messrs. Lannom, Adsit, and Wynne) met with the Honorable Bill Richardson, Tennessee State Senator, to discuss his original intent in the delineation of the two professions during the Senate's deliberations in 1976, when the surveyors' law was passed.

The language below is the A/E Board's interpretation of the delineation of engineering and surveying:

1. Land surveying, measurement and calculation of areas, boundaries, property lines, the subdivision of property and the plotting thereof must be done by a surveyor and his drawing must bear his seal.
2. Subdivision road alignment, road grades, cutting and filling of subdivision lots, and changes to the topography which involves a final grading plan may be performed by either an engineer or a surveyor; the designer's seal must be applied to the drawing. In localities where instability of final grades and slopes requires analysis of soils to prevent conditions hazardous to life and property, design of roads, slopes, ditches, and building sites must be done by an engineer.
3. Culverts, storm drainage pipes, water lines, sewer lines, electric power lines or other utilities not existing prior to development shall not be shown on a subdivision drawing unless that drawing bears the seal of the engineer who designed them. Culverts under roads, having open ends, leading from one road ditch to the other, which are prefabricated manufactured pipes, may be shown on a subdivision drawing sealed by either a surveyor or an engineer.
4. Drainage design for special consideration, such as storm water retention or flood control, must be performed by an engineer, and the engineer's seal must be applied to the drawing.

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